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disturbed by the Arabs, who hold them below injury. They are markedly hospitable, like all people who have nothing to give. They assert themselves to be a tribe of the Sabians emigrated to Nejd. The Mohammedans deny this. The Selaib eat carrion and profess themselves to be the chosen people of God, who pay no tribute or tax, since no one will deign to receive it from them.

I have not as yet come on any people practising sun or fire worship. It is vaguely asserted, however, that persons of these religions are to be found in the direction of Al-Yemamah. Some of the Arabs bear names obviously derived from the old astronomical religion, viz., *Budhr* (Moon), *Shums* (Sun), *Zohra* (Venus), &c.

There are two sources of confusion in the statement of distances in Arabia:—

1st. A man who rides post tells you the distance in day's journey, according to his rate of travelling. The caravan traveller does the same. For instance, a courier tells you it is two days' journey from Khutif to Al-Hūfūf, and four days' from Al-Hūfūf to Riadh. A caravan-man, on the other hand, would say four days to Al-Hūfūf, and seven to Riadh.

2nd. The second source of confusion results from the distance being measured to the nearest boundary of a district, instead of to its chief town: for instance, in going from Bunder Abbass to Minow, the people tell you that the distance is twelve fursacks; and when you cover that distance, the guide points to a small watercourse as the beginning of Minow, being, in fact, the first land watered from the Minow river. The town of Minow itself is three fursacks further on.

XVI.—*On the New Settlement in Rockingham Bay, and advance of Colonization over North-Eastern Australia; including Mr. J. E. Dalrymple's report on his Journey from Rockingham Bay to the Valley of Lagoons.* Documents forwarded by Sir G. F. BOWEN, Governor of Queensland.

Communicated by the COLONIAL OFFICE.

Read, November 27, 1865.

IN a despatch to the late Duke of Newcastle, Sir George Bowen writes as follows on the subject of the new settlements in North-Eastern Australia:—

I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of a private letter addressed to me by Mr. Arthur Jervoise Scott, Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, giving an interesting description of the foundation of a new settlement in Port Hinchinbrook, at the southern end of Rockingham Bay. This is the site and harbour selected by

myself, in conjunction with the late lamented Commodore Burnett, on our return voyage from Cape York in H.M.S. *Pioneer*, in 1862, and afterwards in 1863 surveyed and strongly recommended by Captain Richards, R.N., then commanding H.M.S. *Hecate*, and now the Hydrographer to the Admiralty.

The official report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, who accompanied the expedition, fully confirmed the remarks of Mr. Scott. The new settlement, to which a considerable number of persons have already proceeded, has been proclaimed as a port of entry and clearance, and a police magistrate and subcollector of customs have been appointed there. As the harbour is one of the best on the eastern coast of Australia, it will at once become the outlet for the pastoral settlements which have already overspread the northern portion of the Kennedy district, as well as portions of the districts of Cook and Burke. A paper which I enclose shows that our pioneer "squatters" have already occupied the banks of the River Lynd, which flows into the Gulf of Carpentaria. They are also fast pushing forward along the banks of the River Flinders, and it is expected that there will be stations on the shores of the Gulf itself within the next 12 months.

It will be seen that, as in all other instances of colonization among savage races, occasional loss of life is inevitable among the first settlers in each new district in Queensland. But this very fact lends to the efforts of our pastoral adventurers a tinge of danger which is of itself fascinating to many minds. As I remarked once before, there is something almost sublime in the steady, silent flow of pastoral settlement over North-Eastern Australia. Although it is difficult to ascertain exactly what progress may have been made at the end of each week and month, still at the close of every year we find that the margin of Christianity and of civilization has been pushed forward by nearly 200 miles. When I assumed office as first Governor of this colony, in December, 1859, Rockhampton, on the River Fitzroy, was the furthest township towards the north. Already in April, 1864, there are inland stations nearly 800 miles beyond Rockhampton by the nearest road. Again, just three years ago, in April 1861, the first white men landed at Port Denison in Edgecumbe Bay, where a flourishing township has already sprung up, with its mayor and corporation, its banks, stores, shipping, and even its cricket and boating clubs.

It is expected that the progress of the new township at Rockingham Bay will be still more rapid than that of the township at Port Denison. Indeed, it is confidently believed by many persons that the former, from its excellent harbour, from its central position, and from the vast and rich "back country" of which it will be the shipping port, will one day become the capital of the new

colony, which may probably at no distant period be formed out of the northern districts of the existing colony of Queensland.

Mr. Scott's Letter on the Foundation of the Settlement at Rockingham Bay.

Port Hinchinbrook, Rockingham Bay,
February 8, 1864.

I now send a short account of our expedition to Rockingham Bay, where we have been established for about a month. We started from Port Denison on the 7th of January, in the schooner *Policeman*, owned and commanded by Captain Powell. Our party consisted of Mr. Tully, Commissioner of Crown Lands in the Northern Kennedy district, Lieutenant Marlow, of the Native Police, three black troopers, Mr. G. E. Dalrymple, Mr. Selheim, Mr. Farquharson, Mr. Müller, a market gardener from Port Denison, Mr. Dalachy, botanist, myself, and 12 white men, carpenters, bushmen, &c., with some supernumeraries for the protection of the settlement, and a black from the tribe on Stradbroke Island, Moreton Bay. We had on board, also, ten horses, a dozen sheep, a couple of goats, some fowls and dogs. We met with contrary winds and calms during the greater part of the voyage; and, consequently, had to put into Cleveland Bay to get grass and water. We arrived in Rockingham Bay on the evening of the sixth day, the 12th of January, and landed under Hecate Point, so named by Captain Richards, R.N., now Hydrographer to the Admiralty. The next two days we spent in sounding and looking for a suitable landing-place for the horses, which we found on the sandy beach recommended by Captain Richards for a town site. The *Policeman* was run in at high water, with her bowsprit over the sandy beach, while she herself lay in the soft clay, of which the bottom of the whole bay seems to be composed; and the horses were all landed in safety on dry land. We were more fortunate in this than in the embarkation at Port Denison, when we lost our only draught horse, which was strangled in the slings. The other horses landed in first-rate condition, and seemed none the worse for the trip. The next fortnight was spent in a thorough examination of Rockingham Bay, both by sea and land. We shifted our camp about a mile from our first landing-place, and I think we have now found the best place for the settlement. In choosing the exact site it was an *embarras de richesses*, for the gravelly ridge on which we now are extends for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the whole of it being suitable for a township; while in Port Hinchinbrook there are several localities which would serve our purpose. We were therefore guided in our selection by the probable course of the road from the interior and by the most convenient supply of water. The water at present is abundant everywhere, and several small streams, apparently per-

manent, flow down from the ranges immediately behind the town site; some of these appear to find their way to sea under the porous soil; for, sinking anywhere in the beach, we come to excellent fresh water a few inches below the surface, and we drew our supply for the camp from a barrel sunk in the sand, just below high-water mark.

Mr. Tully has surveyed a few sections of the proposed township, a plan of which, I believe, he has forwarded to the Government for their approval. The site is on the mainland, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-west of Hecate Point. Large ships can lie at anchor about a mile off, while vessels of a light draught can come close in. The rise and fall is at least 12 feet at spring tides, and the bottom being of soft blue clay, any vessel can lie within a few yards of the shore without the slightest danger. The bay is perfectly sheltered by Hinchinbrook and Goold Islands from the prevailing winds from the south-east, while Dunk Island, the Family Group of islets, and numerous shoals, prevent any great sea from the north-east. Should a storm come from that quarter a vessel could run in a few minutes into Port Hinchinbrook, where she would be perfectly sheltered on all sides. Altogether I believe this will prove to be the best harbour in Queensland; and the *Great Eastern* herself could lie off Hecate Point or in any part of Port Hinchinbrook, the deep water in which extends for several miles to the southward.

The ridges on which the township will stand are of a coarse quartzose sand, perfectly dry in any weather. We have had a week's heavy rain, and at this moment they are as dry as they were before it fell. Abundance of timber suitable for building is to be procured close to the town, principally consisting of *melaleuca* (tea-tree), *Brigalow*, and a species of "stringy-bark" called by the bushmen *Messmate*, and which splits into excellent slabs.

A few days after our arrival, a small cutter, belonging to Mathews, of Port Denison, came in: the crew have been busy ever since they arrived in splitting slabs. The men express great satisfaction with the timber, and say that it is unequalled in any part of the coast-country of Northern Queensland that they have yet seen.

The grass in the immediate neighbourhood of the town is coarse, and it would be called third-class pastoral country; but under the ranges there are patches of good country quite sufficient to feed any amount of stock required for the settlement.

The climate appears much the same as that of Port Denison, and we get the same sea-breeze. I suppose from the latitude that the thermometer is a little higher; but the heat is not oppressive, and we have the great advantage of being almost entirely free from mosquitoes and sand-flies. We are all of us now sleeping without mosquito curtains.

For the growth of tropical produce we have the authority of Mr.

Hill, the director of the Botanic Gardens at Brisbane, that the country in this vicinity cannot be surpassed. Mr. Dalachy, the botanist sent up with the expedition by Dr. Müller, of Melbourne, endorses this opinion. He has discovered a great number of new plants already, of which he will forward specimens to Dr. Müller, and among them are two new fruits.

Mr. Dalrymple and Lieut. Marlow started a few days ago to explore the road to the interior. They were absent four days and discovered a good gap, through which they arrived at the top of the range. The road will probably pass through the range about 20 miles to the southward of the gap, at the heads of the river Mackay, which we discovered on our last expedition, about nine months ago. There are no swamps of any consequence to pass, and the range, though steep, is sound and free from stones. A considerable amount of jungle will have to be cut through, and Mr. Dalrymple will proceed in a few days with a party of seven or eight men to cut a passage. Had poor Kennedy only landed where we did, instead of at Tam O'Shanter's Point, 25 miles to the northward, the lamentable tale of his expedition would never have been written. From the top of a small range near the town we can see the country in which he was struggling for two months, and it appears a succession of lagoons, swamps, and mangrove flats, extending for 20 miles. The scrubs seem to abound with wild bananas; and Mr. Dalrymple, while amongst the ranges, came on some small plains covered with them. Amongst the bananas a great number of wide native tracks reminded him of the approaches to a village in Ceylon. The fruit is now ripe; it is smaller than that of most of the cultivated varieties, and full of seeds, and seems to form a great portion of the food of the blacks.

The blacks are very numerous, both on the mainland and the islands, so much so, that it would be the height of imprudence to let them into the settlement for some time. They came off to the *Policeman* in their canoes, and we also had an interview with them on the mainland, by means of Morrill (the shipwrecked sailor, who had lived among the natives for so many years), and who, though he did not speak exactly the same dialect, was able to understand them. We explained to them that we were come to take possession of a certain portion of the coast, and that they should be undisturbed in the remainder. The fact of occupying their country is at once a declaration of war with the blacks; and as we shall soon be but a very few men in the settlement, it would only lead to great loss of life on both sides to admit them prematurely. They have the largest spears and shields I have yet seen in Australia, and only powerful men could wield such weapons. Lieut. Marlow is a very active and energetic officer, and

has been of the greatest assistance to us ; and we must also acknowledge the great courtesy of Mr. Tully, who has given us every aid of his professional knowledge in surveying and choosing the site.

We have now got up a small iron store and temporary tent of saplings and iron, and we are erecting a cottage of timber. I shall be left here for some time with seven or eight men, while Mr. Dalrymple is away exploring the road into the interior ; but, I believe, we shall be perfectly safe, as with the blacks it is *omne ignotum pro terribili* ; and they will not know our weakness till we obtain reinforcements by sea and land. A number of people are only waiting for a favourable report from us to come up at once from Port Denison : and, I believe, in a few months the settlement will have attained a respectable size.

Myall Downs, Lynd River.

The following is an extract from a letter addressed to the editor of the 'Northern Argus':—

After leaving the River Burdekin by the Valley Road, a branch of which crosses the range bounding the Kennedy district, you reach Mr. John M'Kinnon's sheep station on the Lynd River. The sheep here look in first-rate order, and have had capital lambings. I enclose a sample of the wool off their backs, which I think proves beyond all doubt that Northern Queensland can and will produce staple equal to any grown on the famed Darling Downs. We are very fortunate in having plenty of every kind of salt herbs, without which we could not manage.

Mr. Donald M'Donald, from South Australia, has formed a sheep camp west of Mr. M'Kinnon's about sixteen miles, on the Copperfield River, which is a branch of the Lynd. His sheep have been up two months, and look remarkably well. A herd of cattle is now on the road up for this station.

Mr. Colloings, from New England, has a cattle station east of the Lynd River. Messrs. M'Donald and Bell, of Port Denison, have also a fine cattle station on the east bank of the Lynd ; they have been up about twelve months, and are in splendid condition. A Mr. Robertson is the manager.

Messrs. G. B. and S. Yeates have formed a sheep and cattle station on the west side of Lynd River, called Myall Downs, junction of the rivers Copperfield and Lynd, at Gilbert Range. This makes the sum total of pioneer squatters in this part of Queensland. Any amount of runs are ready for squatters north and west. Cartage and labour are the present drawbacks. A port at Rockingham Bay or Trinity Bay would open up this country rapidly. At present we look to a township on the Upper Burdekin from

which to get our stores—a second Dalby. Here is an opening for some Maitland carriers to fetch bullock teams over; the carriage is 30% a ton per 100 miles.

The climate is delightfully cool. I send you a table of the thermometer for some days in January and this month. Water, it is said, boils at 209 degrees. This place is 1630 feet above the sea.

Date.				Thermometer, in Tent Shade.	Wind and Weather.
January	22	..	..	90°	East wind.
„	23	..	..	89°	East wind.
„	24	..	..	98°	No wind.
„	25	..	..	91°	East wind.
„	26	..	..	99°	Thunder clouds. No wind.
„	27	..	..	95°	Ditto showers. Light wind.
„	28	..	..	91°	Sea scuds, east wind.
„	29	..	..	87°	Cloudy, heavy east wind.
„	30	..	..	86°	Ditto ditto.
„	31	..	..	84°	Ditto ditto.
February	1	..	..	76°	Cloudy, s.e. wind.
„	2	..	..	80°	Ditto ditto.
„	3	..	..	78°	Ditto ditto s.w.

On the 30th of January (Saturday), a report reached Yeates' Station that Mr. Donald M'Donald had been murdered by the blacks on the previous Wednesday, and a party was immediately formed to go in search of him, and arrived at his camp about 2 o'clock P.M. the same day. Upon examination we found nothing had been touched. We put Mr. Robertson's black boy Davy on the blacks' trail, whose number appeared to be about seven, and ran it over soft ground on from the camp to the west bank of the Copperfield River, half a mile south from the camp. As the grass had been burnt we could have tracked a mouse. Further on we could see the tracks of boots, which, from the strides, had evidently been running close to the bank, making for the camp. The tracks of the blacks followed, though at some distance from each other. At last we came upon Mr. M'Donald's body lying on its face with a four-pronged spear in the breast and several wounds about his body. Another hundred yards would have saved him by bringing him in sight of his camp; the ravines and intervening brushwood prevented his making a straight course, another cause of his destruction. A hundred yards nearer the camp lay deceased's sheep-dog, speared to the heart. So we read the funeral service over M'Donald, buried him, and fenced the grave in as well as we could. The sheep we found all right; they had not been interfered with.

Statement of Mr. M'Donald's son, a young lad:—"Last

Wednesday my father went after the sheep, and it being a wet morning he took his coat, but left his rifle behind, which he usually took with him. Myself and two sisters and father were the only persons here; have been up now about eight weeks. At about 1 o'clock on Wednesday heard cries and shouting about 400 yards up the river. At first I thought my brother John had arrived with the cattle. Before dark I took a gun and went up to look for father, but saw nothing of him. The sheep came home. On Thursday morning I got up the horses. My sister went out and found our dog speared in the side. We then thought the blacks had killed father, and started for Mr. M'Kinnon's station. Having no road or 'blaze' to our camp, we went a long way out of the proper direction—were out all night. Arrived at M'Kinnon's on Friday afternoon, when four contractors started at once for Mr. Robertson's and Yeates' stations, a distance of 30 miles on the war trail.

"Sunday, January 31st.—Six of the party, including Davy, black boy, recovered part of deceased's greatcoat, a pair of woollen gloves. 'The hat, a felt one, was not seen in the rebel's camp.' Thus ends the report of the first murder in this new district.

Report of Mr. George Elphinstone Dalrymple, on his Journey from Rockingham Bay to the Valley of Lagoons.

In a more recent despatch to Mr. Cardwell, dated August 2, 1864, Sir George Bowen communicates the Report of Mr. G. E. Dalrymple on his successful journey into the interior from Rockingham Bay to the Valley of Lagoons,* upon which he writes as follows:—

In continuation of my Despatch of 5th April last, and of previous communications on the same subject, I have now the honour to transmit a very interesting Report from Mr. George Elphinstone Dalrymple,† giving further information respecting the new settlement at Port Hinchinbrook, in Rockingham Bay, which I have caused to be named "Cardwell."

The discovery of a practicable dray road from this excellent harbour into the interior, over the range of mountains which here runs nearly parallel to the coast, is a fact of much importance. Cardwell will at once become the shipping port, not only of the whole district of North Kennedy, but of a large portion of the districts of Cook and Burke, which are being rapidly occupied by our pastoral settlers. The Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands

* For an account of a previous unsuccessful attempt to open a road between these two places, see Mr. Scott's communication in the 'Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society,' vol. viii. p. 110.

† Brother to Sir James Elphinstone Dalrymple, Bart., M.P. for Portsmouth.

has informed me that our pioneer squatters are already within about 100 miles of the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria, for he has just issued a licence to a gentleman named Henning to occupy the rich open plains on the banks of the river Flinders, surrounding the isolated castle-like hill named "Fort Bowen" by the explorer, Mr. Landsborough. (See Stanford's new map of Australia, published in 1863.)

I requested Commander the Honourable John Carnegie, R.N., to visit the new settlement at Rockingham Bay on his voyage to Cape York in H.M.S. *Salamander*. Regular communication by merchant steamers will be established almost immediately between Cardwell, Brisbane, and Sydney.

I forward an additional copy of the enclosed Report for transmission (with your approval) to the Royal Geographical Society, in continuation of the many valuable papers which that body has already received from Mr. Dalrymple. That gentleman has been mainly instrumental in opening the two new harbours of Port Denison and Cardwell, and in exploring the great district of Kennedy, which embraces an area larger than that of England, the whole of which has been occupied during the last three years by the flocks and herds of our settlers. As myself a Life-Fellow, I hope that the society may elect Mr. Dalrymple to be a Corresponding Member, or may testify in some other appropriate manner its sense of the important services which he has rendered to the cause of geographical research, and of British colonisation.

Brisbane, August 1, 1864.

To His Excellency Sir George Ferguson Bowen, K.G.C.M.G., &c. &c. &c.

SIR,—I do myself the honour to inform your Excellency that I have succeeded in discovering and opening a practicable dray-road from Rockingham Bay to the interior at the Valley of Lagoons, and have, in conjunction with my partner, Mr. A. J. Scott, established a new settlement in connection therewith, on the shores of Port Hinchinbrook, in Rockingham Bay.

Being myself perfectly satisfied of the possibility of finding a road, and being also of opinion that my labours would be much curtailed by the establishment of a safe basis of operations on the seaboard, and by a general view of the whole face of the coast ranges from the entrance to Rockingham Bay—so as to enable me to detect a spot where a pass might with the greatest ease be obtained on to the table-land—we determined to proceed by sea, with a full equipment for the purpose, to form a settlement on these waters, and to endeavour to force a passage thence to the interior.

We therefore chartered at Port Denison the schooner *Policeman* (master and owner, Walter Powell), and on the 12th January,

1864, shipped horses, sheep, stores, materials for building, &c., and prepared for sea.

Our party numbered 20 souls, amongst whom were:—Mr. Arthur J. Scott, Mr. Tully, c.c.l., Lieutenant Marlow (Queensland native police), Mr. Selheim (squatter), Mr. George M. Farquharson (of Invercauld, in Aberdeenshire), Mr. Dallachy (a botanist, sent to accompany me by Dr. Müller, of Melbourne), James Morrill (17 years with the aborigines, as interpreter), J. Morrissey (hotel-keeper), T. F. Milne (storekeeper), Wilhelm Peters (carpenter), Walter Butler, E. Kerr, R. Ewart, &c. &c.

On the 15th of January the *Policeman*, with our small cutter, the *Heather Bell*, of 3 tons, in tow, was at length clear of Port Denison Heads, whence we experienced a most tedious and uncomfortable passage to the northward, having to live on deck under a burning sun, and exposed to heavy squalls of wind and drenching rain, alternating with light and contrary winds; the vessel crowded beyond its capacity with men, horses, and cargo.

On the 18th January, we brought up under the high land of the west side of Cape Cleveland, and went on shore for water and grass, both of which we obtained behind a sandy beach $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile inside the cape, at a spot which I had visited on my expedition in the *Spitfire* in 1860.

A fair wind coming up from the south-east during the night, on the morning of the 19th we passed the Palm Islands on our port beam, and sighted the lofty rugged masses of Hinchinbrook Island to the north-north-west, its summits shrouded in clouds.

As we ran down its eastern side before the fresh south-easter the clouds rose majestically from the extraordinary jagged peaks and pinnacles, which towered high above us to the height of 2500 feet sheer out of the ocean, in bluffs and precipices of grey granite rock—the deep fissures and gorges furrowing their sides right down to the rock-bound shore, lashed by the ever-restless surge of the Pacific, being frequently clothed with picturesque groups of pines (*Araucaria Cookii*), dense scrubs, and forest trees.

Towards the north end of the island, the mountains descend in more regular slopes, clothed with open forest from the sandy beach to their summits; Mount Bowen, Mount Burnett, and Mount Pitt again rising to an elevation of from 2000 to 2300 feet.

Passing rapidly the high rocky headland of Cape Sandwich—which is connected with the mainland of Hinchinbrook Island by a low spit of desert sand-hills—we passed between the long, low, rocky, pine-clad Brook Islands on our starboard side, and the forest-clad peak of Goold Island, 1375 feet in height, on our port beam.

Keeping away westerly, close under the northern declivity—the whole of Rockingham Bay broke suddenly upon our view, backed by its imposing continuous blue lofty ranges of mountains of from 3500 to 4000 feet elevation—rising abruptly from a level forest-clad low country, from which numerous smokes of bush fires of the natives curled upwards into the clear blue sky.

These ranges met the lofty mass of Hinchinbrook to the south-east and eastward, and stretched far away into the northern horizon. The field of our labours was before us; but this unbroken mountain wall seemed to cut off all communication with the interior from the immediate neighbourhood of the port.

We anchored about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile inside Hecate Point, in 4 fathoms, mud. Some blacks came off in three small bark canoes, two persons in each; but we did not encourage them to come alongside, and they left and went across to Hinchinbrook Island.

On the morning of the 20th we landed opposite our anchorage on the mainland, at the spot reported upon by Captain Richards, of H.M.S. *Hecate*, as being suitable for a town site; but finding the water shoaly for some distance from the beach, and the forest rather dense, we determined to examine the entire shores of the port before deciding upon the precise place for settlement.

We therefore made sail on the schooner and stood down Port Hinchinbrook (which connects Rockingham and Halifax Bays), carrying soundings of from 7 to 12 fathoms for 10 miles to where we anchored.

On the 21st, having found by exploration in the *Heather Bell*, that the whole shores of the passage south of our anchorage were one immense mangrove flat intersected by saltwater creeks, none of which reach the sound country behind, we weighed and stood up the passage, examining the coast as we proceeded, and were much disappointed in not finding a single spot in the finest part of the harbour which was not either covered or surrounded with mangroves and swamp—until we returned to Captain Richards' site, where we determined to fix our camp at the most open spot at the north-west end of the Two-mile Beach, and off which we anchored.

When coming up the harbour a number of aborigines were seen on a small sandy beach. I therefore went with a party in the ship's boat, with James Morrill, the interpreter. The blacks came out some way into the water to meet us; a number of others lay in wait in the bushes.

They asked for tomakawks, &c., and seemed much astonished that Morrill could converse with them—if not exactly in their own dialect, yet so as to be perfectly understood.

I asked them if there was not a river behind the range (one I had seen on my expedition last year), and where it ran into the sea; but they most positively denied, over and over again, that any

such river existed. I then asked them where the easiest track existed through the ranges, as I wished to go over to the great river, *Maal Maal*, or Burdekin (pointing in that direction), but they stated with much animation that there was no way through the ranges, and that they went far away (pointing to the north-west), and there crossed, and would take me that way themselves!—an arrangement which I did not exactly appreciate, considering the smallness of my party, and the hostility shown by these very blacks to the unfortunate Kennedy and his companions—not to mention that right behind them, and only a few miles off, I saw a splendid gap, by which I had determined to endeavour to penetrate to the interior; and therefore felt perfectly certain that these cunning savages were answering every question by a falsehood for their own purposes.

They were large muscular men, with bullet-shaped heads and a ferocious, cunning, and repulsive cast of features.

Seeing that to admit any of these people to our new settlement would be to allow a multitude of armed savages to have the chance of watching and harassing, and endangering, at any weak moment, a small isolated camp of settlers in a densely wooded country, some of whom would require to be out in the bush splitting and sawing timber without any protection, I told them, through Morrill, that we had come to take possession of the coast from a point on the north-west shore of the bay to a point opposite Haycock Island, and that we were going to settle there and possess it.

They said, “they hoped we were not going to war with them.” I replied, “No: that we did not wish to hurt them, but that we wished to be left alone; that if they would keep off and not molest us, we would not injure or interfere with them in any way.” They seemed to understand this ultimatum, and retired slowly into the mangroves; Morrill having explained it to them over and over again, and told them to inform the neighbouring tribes accordingly.

I had obtained the services of Morrill from your Excellency’s Government for the purpose of, if possible, coming to an amicable understanding with these people, having always been of opinion that hostility and bloodshed frequently occur between the wild blacks and white settlers at the outset of their intercourse, from perfect ignorance on the part of the former as to what the white men require of them—“Thou shalt not steal,” and “Thou shalt do no murder,” having always required heretofore to be taught them by the rifle and revolver.

It was with great regret that we found it impossible to find a site for settlement on the shores of the inner harbour further to the southward; however, that selected is one of the finest in Australia.

Port Hinchinbrook is a perfectly land-locked harbour of 25 miles in length by 2 in breadth, carrying soundings of from 4 to 12 fathoms at dead low-water spring-tides, and I feel very confident that an entrance will be discovered from Halifax Bay, close under the high land of Hinchinbrook, through the bar reported to exist there by Captain Blackwood of H.M.S. *Fly*.

Such bars along the north-east coast of Australia are formed by the south-east Trade meeting the currents of rivers or tidal estuaries throwing up banks to windward, but almost invariably with an available channel to the northward, as at the mouths of the Brisbane, Fitzroy, Burdekin, and other minor streams and outlets of the coast.

The lofty peaks of Hinchinbrook on the eastern, and the mountain chain of the mainland on the western side, completely shelter this beautiful harbour from all winds, and render it the most grandly picturesque as well as one of the finest of the Australian ports. It is, in fact, inferior to Sydney only in point of wharfage, vessels unfortunately being unable to approach within a quarter of a mile of any portion of the mainland.

The northern entrance to the port is completely sheltered by Dunk Island, the Family and Goold islands, and banks, through which a broad passage of $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms at low-water springs gives easy access from the open sea.

The site for settlement recommended by Captain Richards, R.N., and which we decided upon adopting, is inside and about west-south-west from Hecate Point; and here, during the heaviest weather experienced since our arrival, and during the most stormy season of the year, there has been no break whatever on the beach, and small boats could ply at all times with perfect safety. Although the anchorage for large vessels is some little distance out, yet so soft and even is the flat in front of the town, that they can run right in at high water, and, lying in perfect safety at low water, land cargo on to the beach from the ship's tackles. A jetty, such as is proposed at Port Denison, will in due time quite overcome this difficulty.

The site available for the township extends behind 2 miles of open sandy beach, destitute of mangroves, and slopes gently back for about 2 miles to the base of the mountains, which rise in abrupt and imposing masses behind; and in future years, when the forest shall have fallen, and churches, public buildings, streets, warehouses, &c., spread far along the gleaming shore and back to the base of the mountains, and the taper spars and black hulls of a merchant fleet give life to the now lonely waters of the harbour, Australia will hold nothing more beautiful than the city of Cardwell and its port.

The soil of the town site is a coarse dry gravel, evidently disintegrated granite rock, from the range behind.

The forest is composed of several varieties of *eucalyptus* (gums), *melaleuca* (tea-tree), a large tree called messmate, a kind of stringy bark, and very valuable for building purposes; bloodwood, white-wood, Moreton Bay ash, &c., and some fine large specimens of a description of *ficus*, with dense foliage and white wax-looking flowers, with powerful perfume, which latter trees grow on the beach, their limbs overhanging the sea.

Freshwater is obtained anywhere along the beach by digging, and is of excellent quality. Also in small running creeks, about half a mile from the town, and in a small swamp close to the settlement; and, I should presume, from the elevation and proximity of the ranges, that the supply is permanent.

On the 22nd of January, we landed our horses, sheep, tents, &c., from the *Policeman*, and formed a camp at the west end of the beach; and on the 26th, having, after a careful examination of the locality by land and sea, decided upon the eastern end as the site combining proximity to the best anchorage, the soundest and most healthy ground, and convenient communication with the probable route to the interior, we moved our camp to that place, erected an iron store and huts, landed our cargo, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing forest trees falling in all directions, slabs being split, clearings made, and this silent wilderness of the north awaking suddenly to life and civilisation.

To the westward of the settlement a fine valley runs up about 8 miles into the range, and seeing leading spurs descending at its head into the low country, I proceeded to explore it for a road, accompanied by Lieutenant Marlow (native mounted police), and three troopers.

Passing through rather dense and lofty forest for about 6 miles, we entered a very beautiful tract of rich country, of limited extent, openly timbered ridges descending from the range into small rich plains and forest glades, intersected with many clear running stony streams, all joining a small rapid river (which I have named the Marlow), its banks clothed with dense lofty jungle, a mass of creeping vines, palms, &c. At the head of the valley, where it was surrounded by almost an amphitheatre of precipitous mountains, this river fell from the crest of the range in a fine cascade into the woodlands below.

A broad, hard-beaten path of the blacks led us into this retreat, where small verdant plains, bounded and broken by clumps of vine, jungle, and fig-trees, varied by the fresh, bright green of groves or single trees of the wild banana, and the tall, graceful stems of the *Seaforthia elegans* palm, half completed the delusion

that we were entering one of the beautiful mountain villages of Ceylon or of the islands of the Pacific.

The whole of the open ground of this portion of the floor of the valley was dotted with old and recent "bora" grounds of the blacks, where they hold large meetings of their tribes at certain seasons, at the full moon, to make warriors of the youths, and have fights and "corroborees." Certainly a more beautiful and picturesque site for such wild ceremonies could scarcely be selected.

Over these "bora" grounds the soil was beaten down hard and bare over a space of a quarter of an acre, like an oriental thrashing-floor, and generally surrounded by clusters of small, round-topped huts, covered with *melaleuca* bark. In one of these we found some of the shields and wooden swords of the natives—the former about 3 feet long by $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad, and of an oval shape, with a knob in the centre. They are formed of the soft light wood of the buttress root of a description of *ficus*, and are painted in blue, black, red, and yellow bands, in a quaint zigzag pattern, found on all shields in this part of the colony.

The sword is formed of a hard and tough wood, like brigalow. These swords are about 5 feet long and 6 inches broad, and shaped with a curve, and point like an infantry sword. The handle is fined off, and bound with cord and native wax, and is only large enough for one hand; and as they are so heavy that few white men can raise them at arm's length, it is difficult to understand how they can be in any way an efficient weapon in the hands of the Australian savages, unless they are far more powerful men than their more southern brethren, and more so than the generality of white men.

On the 4th of February I ascended the range, and leaving Lieutenant Marlow and trooper Norman outside, with troopers Warbragen and Archy, cut my way up to the summit, through the densest vine and thorn jungle I ever met with, even in the East Indies. Besides an undergrowth of smaller thorny bushes, a perfect network is formed of cane creepers, of various dimensions, covered with hook-shaped thorns, which catch one by the face, back, hands, and legs, so that not only were our clothes nearly torn to ribbons, but we returned to the outside all scratched and bleeding, and our hands and wrists so full of poisonous thorns, that on my return to the settlement I was forced to put both hands in poultices.

From the summit of the range I found that the dense scrub extended for miles to the westward, without a break, and therefore I returned to the settlement, determined to examine the gap to the southward.

On the 10th of February I proceeded with Mr. Arthur Scott

and my black boy Cockey to examine this gap, which is distant 10 miles from the settlement, in a southerly direction.

A blacks' track or path led us right into the gap, crossing many swamps behind the mangroves; but I have since made an excellent road through sound forest country, along the base of the range.

We ascended by easy spurs to a hill above the saddle of this gap, and thence discovered that it descended by a gorge, full of dense scrub, or rather jungle, into the broad valley of the fine river (which I had seen from the western ranges last year, and had questioned the blacks about), and on the opposite or western side of which the main coast range, sweeping back from its lofty abutment on the coast of Halifax Bay, trends away in a west north-west, and, finally, westerly direction, on to the Mount Lang table-land, where by the hills at the head of Great Anthill Creek, Razor-back, Mount Lang, and others, it joins the Great East Australian Cordilleras, where it forms the watershed of the Burdekin and Lynd Rivers.

From the heads of Separation Creek of Leichhardt, a lofty range—in reality a great spur of the main backbone range—sweeps round nearly parallel to the coast range, and sending out a branch (the northern watershed of the Macay River, terminating in Tam O'Shanter Point, inside Dunk Island), the main mass forms the wall-like range of Rockingham Bay, terminating opposite the south entrance of the inner passage, called Port Hinchinbrook, in Mount Leach, a granitic mass of fully 4000 feet elevation.

Between Mount Leach and Mount Arthur Scott (the next most lofty mountain of the chain) is the very peculiar depression or gap which we had ascended—at once solving the difficulty in my mind of overcoming the previously considered impassable Rockingham ranges.

The new river, which I have had the honour of naming the Herbert, after the Colonial Secretary, rises on and traverses the eastern slopes of the table-land; and being precipitated over the edge of the basalt in a heavy fall (which we have heard distinctly 12 miles off) into a deep gorge-like valley between the granitic mountains of the great Rockingham spur and the igneous rocks of the main coast-range and table-land—as these open out towards the coast—winds through the beautiful and rich country of the Vale of Herbert, to all appearances running into Halifax Bay and the south end of Rockingham Channel, and there assisting by its deposits in the formation of the great extent of mud flats and mangrove swamps which cumber this end of the harbour. I am of opinion that the sources of the Herbert are identical with the Separation Creek of Leichhardt—more particularly as for many miles of its upper course it forms the boundary between the primary and

metamorphic rocks ; and I could discover no other practicable outlet for Separation Creek through the northern ranges.

On the 15th of February, accompanied by Messrs. G. M. Farquharson and R. Ewart, and two black boys, viz., trooper Norman of the native police, and my own boy Cockey, from Stradbroke Island, Moreton Bay, I left the settlement, with five riding-horses, four spare and pack-horses, rations for fourteen days, arms, and other necessities.

Keeping close to the base of the range, we traversed ridgy open forest country of messmate, ironbark, bloodwood, gum, and other trees, crossing many running creeks (with vine scrubs, palms, and wild bananas on their banks) running from the range into the harbour, and camped under the north side of Mount Leach, and between it and Port Hinchinbrook.

On the 20th of February we continued our course between the range and the harbour, our passage being impeded by the rocky base of the mountains, furrowed by deep gullies and creeks descending right into the mangrove swamps.

At the south end of Mount Leach we crossed a low scrubby range running out from it, and struck to the W.N.W.

The weather was now and had been for some time very wet, and we had great difficulty in making our way across the swamps which cover the country between Mount Leach and Halifax Bay.

In this locality we discovered a new and very gorgeous plant, about the size and shape of a small pine-apple, but formed of rich deep purple leaves, of the same tint, form, and arrangement as a dahlia—the flower being equally solid, but cylindrical instead of round. It grows upon a cane-like stem, similar to *Vanda ceru-liensis*. I could not carry one on this occasion ; but doubtless Mr. Dallachy has by this time added this new plant to his valuable collection.

Our route lay about 15 miles along the base of Mount Leach range, the swamps and scrubs hemming us in on the left and encumbering the whole country. On the west side of the range, however, these gave place to extensive rolling plains, with grasses as high as my saddle-bow, but by no means coarse, and the richest red chocolate-coloured loam I have seen in Queensland. These plains extended on both sides of the River Herbert, the banks of which showed 30 to 40 feet of pure mould where cut into by the stream.

We encountered much difficulty and danger in crossing this river, it being broad, rapid, and deep from the flood-waters of the recent rains on the table-land ; my horse and Cockey's were rolled over by the stream, obliging us to swim for it. I was also in a position of considerable danger from a tribe of wild blacks, while left alone, with my arms and ammunition wet, on the far side, whilst Cockey was bringing the others across.

I made three separate attempts to cross the main coast range on to the table-land, without success, over a distance of 20 miles along it; but finally crossed it by cutting through a good deal of dense vine scrub, and discovered a good spur descending from the range into the Vale of Herbert, suitable for a dray-road, about 20 miles in a w.n.w. direction from the gap in the Rockingham Bay range, between Mount Leach and Mount Arthur Scott, the country between being open and sound for a dray-road the whole way along the base of the back of the Rockingham range.

That portion of the main coast range which we ascended has a line of perfectly open, bald, grassy summits for about two miles—descending steep, scrubby, and broken into the Vale of Herbert, that river winding far below like a silver snake out of the gorges of its upland birthplace, through mountain-flanked rich woodlands and plains. Further to the eastward it spreads out into the dim distant level seaboard of Halifax Bay, with its faint blue line of ocean, dotted with the hilly outlines of the Palm Island far to the seaward; all softened and mellowed by the gauze-like summer-heat haze of declining day—the setting sunbeams shining deep purple on the distant crenelated peaks of Hinchinbrook, and the chains of mountains north and south. Most grand and lovely in its scenery is this “Vale of Herbert”—mountains, peaks, cliffs, waterfalls, forests, plains, and what is seldom met with in Australian scenery, the clear waters of a broad running river, adding life, light, and beauty to the whole.

To the west a shallow valley full of scrub, bounded by a second line of low bald hills, still cut us off from the table-land, which beyond rolls far away to the westward, until it sinks towards the Gulf of Carpentaria to the north, and to the shed of waters towards Spencer’s Gulf to the south and west.

We had to cut our way out through the second scrub, and thence steered w. $\frac{1}{2}$ s. to the Valley of Lagoons.

On the first day we made 20 miles, passing through ridgy, sound, forest country, well grassed and watered, and fit for either sheep or cattle, and crossing the main head of the Burdekin. Coming from the southward, about 12 miles from the range, a more northern head overlaps the River Herbert, behind the north end of Sea View Range. The south head overlaps the heads of the Perry.

On the second day I struck Lucy Creek, the feeder of Lake Lucy, a fine sheet of water, which I discovered last year, a few miles eastward of the junction of Great Anthill Creek with the Burdekin.

A few miles down Lucy Creek it runs through a curious passage or lynn of red conglomerate rock, in which were a few indistinct impressions of fossil-shells.

Following the creek down still west by south for about 10 miles, we came on rich gum and box flats on its banks, and out upon the splendid rich rolling basaltic plains and downs of the Lake Lucy run.

This fine country, the commencement of the rich table-land which extends far to the west of the Clarke, Lynd, Copperfield, Barkly, and Flinders, skirts the shores of Lake Lucy for many miles, and is not surpassed by any down country in Queensland.

The soil is dark, chocolate-coloured, and black, with basaltic stones scattered over it, and small patches of scrub; and, like the remainder of the table-land as described by Leichhardt, "finer sheep and cattle stations for the squatter cannot exist."

On March 1st, crossing the low Psammite range which divides Lake Lucy from the valley of the Burdekin, below Great Anthill Creek, we followed down the valley of that river, with its rich grass, lofty gum-trees, and lotus-covered lagoons, till the hills on either side sweeping backwards, the beautiful open forest-ridges opened out in scattered timber, like an English park, upon the plains and lakes of Leichhardt's Valley of Lagoons.

Herd of short-horned cattle were lying in groups on the woodland ridges, or browsing over the rich pastures with that quiet laziness, sure evidence of their thriving condition—their red and white flecked sides forming a beautiful contrast to the deep green verdure of the country and blue waters of the lakes.

The Burdekin, here a deep swift running stream of about 20 yards broad, winds down the centre of the plains, destitute of river timber, save here and there a dark cluster of *casuarinæ* (swamp oak) on its grassy banks.

Following the plain between the left bank of the river and the Pelican Lakes for about two miles, the Valley of Lagoons cattle-station of Messrs. Scott Brothers, Dalrymple and Co., came in view; the paddock-fence encircling, and the cottage and buildings crowning a commanding ridge half surrounded by the river, and overlooking the whole valley, with its plains, lakes, and wooded hills beyond.

The sheep station is on the basaltic table-land of Leichhardt, about six miles south of Mount Lang; the country being elevated nearly 1000 feet above the Pelican Lakes, and similar in quality to Lake Lucy.

From the centre and most elevated portion of the table-land rises the cone of Mount Lang to an elevation of about 4000 feet above the sea.

It was first ascended by Mr. Arthur Scott and myself last year, and we then found it to be the crater of an extinct volcano, the cup being still quite perfect, of about an acre in extent, and containing the very richest volcanic soil I have ever seen, suggestive

of the possibility of the production of wine-grapes to compete with those of southern Europe.

A large gap is broken out of the south side of the cup, whence, doubtless, poured the three streams of lava, which, as described by Leichhardt, at no distant date have traversed the table-land in distinct lines down into the Valley of Lagoons.

The lava on these streams is heaped up, spiked, jagged, and hollowed out into deep cauldron-shaped holes and fissures, or merely ruffled into gentle wavelets on the surface, as though suddenly cooled but yesterday in its headlong irresistible progress, and occasionally sprinkled with brilliantly-coloured scoria.

It is covered with a variety of scrub bushes, bottle-trees, and, in places, gigantic *eucalypti*, and *casuarinæ*, the latter 4 feet through the butt.

From the summit of Mount Lang the view is far extended and imposing, from the mountains of Rockingham Bay and Hinchinbrook on the east, to the table-top sandstone-hills of the Lynd and the distant table-land of the Flinders, Clarke, and Copperfield to the west; and from the lofty Gilbert and Kirchner ranges to the north, far down the verdant valley of the Burdekin to the southward.

Plains run down from Mount Lang to Great Anthill Creek, and many clear running creeks carry the cold waters of its living springs to the Valley of Lagoons below.

On the 8th of March I started from the station, on my return trip, with the same party and others from the valley, to the number, altogether, of twelve white men and four black boys, three bullock-drays, sixty-one working bullocks, sixty-three fat cattle for the settlement, and eighteen horses. I marked an excellent road to Rockingham Bay by a more direct route than that by which I went up.

We arrived on the crest of the Main Range on the 15th of March, where we camped, and commenced cutting a dray-road through the scrubs, which are very dense and full of thorny vines, "lawyer" palms, and stinging-nettle plants.

We camped here for three weeks, and could not communicate with Rockingham Bay from the flooded state of the River Herbert: the men, however, were hard at work all the time making the road. The latter was at length cleared for three miles, the drays were brought down the range safely, and the passage of the river was at length effected by swimming the bullocks and horses, and dragging the drays over with a rope. Two drays were rolled over by the force of the current, and six of the party who could not swim, and who had gone over on them, had a narrow escape from being washed away. The rest of us rode across stripped, driving the spare horses, bullocks, and fat cattle before us.

From the Herbert crossing, the road traverses the valley of that river in an E.S.E. direction for about 18 miles along the base of the Rockingham Ranges, through open forest ridgy country. There was more difficulty, however, experienced here in crossing the creeks, some of which were scrubby and soft; but good crossings can be made with little trouble.

Here we entered the western side of the singular gorge running up to the saddle of the gap between Mount Leach and Mount Arthur Scott. This gorge, being full of scrub, required another cutting of about two miles, and the sides of the mountains being steep, the road also required to be cut out of the siding for a considerable distance, creeks and gullies filled up with stones, &c.; in fact, a road to be made, not traced and simply cleared of scrub.

The party had now, however, been living for a month on beef and water, without tea, sugar, flour, salt, or tobacco. I therefore decided upon going into the settlement (now only 13 miles off) for supplies and assistance, and having, therefore, cut a bridle-track through the scrub, on Sunday, the 24th April, with Messrs. E. M. Farquharson, Waldron, R. Morris, and Norman and Cockey, black boys, and twenty-six head of fat cattle, we arrived safely at the township, to the mutual delight of the townspeople and ourselves, neither party having heard of the other for two months.

On calling a meeting of the inhabitants, and representing to them that their assistance would open a road at once from the interior into the port, or otherwise I must for the present abandon the enterprise, twenty-six men at once cheerfully volunteered their services and accompanied me to the gap, and under my direction soon cut a good passable road through the scrubs and mountain sidings through the gap, till met by the Valley of Lagoons party from the other side.

The drays were then brought through and into the settlement in safety, and have since returned, crossing the first range with perfect safety, with two tons on each dray. They were also accompanied by spare hands to clear the road and improve the creek crossings for the laden drays.

To the energy of the Rockingham Bay volunteers and our own men the Government of Queensland entirely owes its present possession of a magnificent port, now made available for the commerce of the interior, and of the revenue to be immediately derived therefrom.

I can speak in high terms of the road, and must say that I would rather take my drays across both ranges twice than over Connor's crossing of the Broad Sound range once; and with the expenditure of about 1000*l.*, it is capable of being made far superior to the Darling Downs ranges.

The distance from the Valley of Lagoons to the settlement, by

the road, is 96 miles; thence roads branch off to the Flinders, Lynd, Clarke, Barkly, and down the Burdekin Valley to Port Denison; and in a short time the route by the Flinders will be extended to a new settlement on the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, connecting the Pacific and the Gulf by a road only about 350 miles long.

By this journey I have had the gratification of connecting the tracks of Kennedy with those of Leichhardt and Gregory, thus filling up the only missing link of exploration between Cape Otway and Cape York on the one hand, and Western Australia with the same point on the other; these being again united in various directions by the tracks of McKinlay, Walker, Landsborough, and McDouall Stuart.

Stations have already spread down the Flinders by this route to within 100 miles of the Gulf, and will soon, by reaching its shores, give protection to the telegraphic line to India *via* Timor and Java, inaugurated under your Excellency's Government, and now rapidly progressing northwards.

The upland table-lands behind Rockingham Bay are of great extent, and afford millions of acres of the finest country for the growth of wool.

The scrubs of the ranges, and the rich alluvial flats of the Vale of Herbert, and the valleys penetrating the coast ranges, are undoubtedly the best suited for the growth of sugar, cotton, and coffee in Queensland; and as the site of the town itself is unexceptionable, and the harbour, as before stated, only second to Port Jackson, I can confidently predict a brilliant future for the town of Cardwell and Port Hinchinbrook; my statements concerning the latter, your Excellency, having visited it in H.M.S.S. *Pioneer*, being in a position, I trust, to endorse.

At present there are about 25 houses in the port, and about 50 people; but the report of the success of our enterprise will soon send numbers to swell the population.

The shipping to the port is at present necessarily limited to a small schooner, but the Australian Steam Navigation Company have proposed liberally to pioneer the way to Port Hinchinbrook with a small steamer; and from the position of this port in the centre of the long north-eastern coast of Queensland, and its capabilities as an Admiralty and mercantile steam coaling depôt, I trust, ere many years have passed, to see the ocean-going steamships of a mail line from Brisbane to Singapore, *via* Torres Straits and the splendid inner passage so highly commended by the late Admiral King, and many succeeding eminent naval authorities, making Cardwell a place of regular call; converting it from being, as lately, a wild, desolate, and remote spot, into a flourishing seaport, within easy communication with the marts of the world.
